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Erasmus Policy Statement

International strategy

School of Electrical and Computer Engineering of Applied Studies in Belgrade (VISER) has recognized internationalization of its activities as one of the most promising ways to further development. The Strategy of Internationalization of VISER 2019-2024 and its adjacent document, the Action Plan for the Realisation of the Strategy of Internationalization 2019-2024 are both umbrella documents defining the main objectives VISER should meet in the domain of internationalization (<https://www.viser.edu.rs/en/page/internationalisation>). These documents have been supported by the Teaching and Professional Council of VISER and adopted by the Council of VISER.

VISER is striving to become an institution of higher education, research and development, which, in international terms, is a bearer of activities pertaining to the design of new, additional social values, particularly with regard to quality education of competent and globally competitive experts. International two-way mobility of students and staff, as well as mutual participation in research, development and other projects with partner organisations from abroad, should become regular and routine processes at VISER.

VISER aspires to achieve its vision of international status first and foremost by creating strong and productive ties with relevant partners at the international level, as well as insisting on the quality of educational activities it performs. VISER has mostly cooperated with European countries, due to the proximity and the similarity of official languages, especially in southeastern European countries. VISER chooses its partners based on mutual interest, objectives and the quality of work. The outcome of connecting with international partners should, above all, be international visibility and recognition of the quality of educational activities at VISER, that is, international visibility and recognition of the competencies students acquire at VISER. In addition, VISER wishes to develop positive international status through its continuous advocating for and investment in the development of qualified human resources, with the aim of ensuring material resources and overall development of its educational, research, development and other activities.

The Strategy of Internationalization of VISER 2019-2024 defines four main goals of internationalization: local improvement of internationalization, increase in the rate of international mobility, improvement of cooperation with foreign institutions of higher education, the economy and other partner institutions, as well as commitment to internationalization and international cooperation.

Local improvement of internationalization is planned through the enhancement of course content of study programmes, improvement of language skills, increase in the number of courses offered in English, introduction of a joint degree master programme in cooperation with a foreign partner, introduction of foreign mentorship in master studies, improvement of international

cooperation in research, development, publishing and expert/consulting activities.

The goal of the Strategy of Internationalization, increase in the rate of international mobility, is planned to be realised through the following activities: legal and administrative preparation for mobility projects, strengthening the team for international mobility, improvement of services for both foreign and local students who participate in mobility, increase in positive relations with foreign institutions of higher education in the domain of international mobility, participation in international mobility projects, promotion of VISER as a candidate for international mobility as well as creating databases of international mobility.

The Strategy of Internationalization of VISER sets the plan for the improvement of cooperation with foreign institutions of higher education, the economy and other partner institutions through the realisation of activities of joining relevant European and world programmes of international projects and relevant associations, extension of the base of potential partners for international projects, increase in the number of international projects, legal and administrative improvement of project realisation, development of the platform for monitoring the realisation of international projects, as well as increase in the visibility of VISER's participation in international projects.

Commitment to internationalization and international cooperation will be realised through the following actions: functional, organisational and structural improvement of the School, establishing a corresponding normative framework in the domain of international cooperation, permanent improvement of linguistic competencies of students and staff, providing reliable and sufficient financial means and establishing a mechanism for monitoring the process of internationalization as well as development of international cooperation.

Strategy for the organisation and implementation of international (EU and non-EU) cooperation projects within the framework of the Erasmus+ Programme

In the domain of realised and current international activities, the key activity of VISER is its participation in the realisation of international projects for the improvements in the field of higher education, supported by the European Commission, (<https://www.viser.edu.rs/en/page/international-projects>). VISER has taken part in three completed projects: on one Tempus project (Tempus Joint Project - Curricular Reform) as a coordinator, one Tempus project (Tempus Joint Project - Higher Education and Society) as a partner and one Erasmus+ project (Action Type: Capacity Building in Higher Education) also as a partner. VISER is currently a partner in four international Erasmus+ projects, all which belong to the categories of Key Action 2: Cooperation for Innovation and the Exchange of Good Practices and Action Type: Capacity Building in Higher Education.

In the process of realisation of the above-mentioned international projects, VISER set up a team for project implementation. This team includes the Project Coordinator and is supported by the Director, Administrative Staff, Department of Legal Affairs and Department of Accounting. Apart from that, as it can be seen from the types of the realised projects, each project team is always joined by teaching staff from one or more study programmes which are most related to the needs of project realisation.

In November 2018, VISER extended its team of staff working on international cooperation and appointed a Coordinator for International Cooperation, Coordinator for Mobility and Academic ECTS Coordinator, (<https://www.viser.edu.rs/en/international-cooperation-office>). In addition, Department of Legal Affairs and Department of Accounting appointed a person per each department to be in charge of activities regarding international cooperation. Student Parliament appointed two student representatives to be members of a team working in the department responsible for international cooperation, whose main role would be to mediate between students who come to

VISER on international exchange programmes, and student life and organisation at VISER.

The newly formed team also had the task to prepare the regulatory framework for the future projects of international mobility, which was done through the design of documents, their monitoring and, finally, adoption at the Teaching and Professional Council, (<https://www.viser.edu.rs/en/page/mobility-documents>). VISER adopted a general act, Rulebook on International Mobility, defining formal conditions and procedures for the realisation of international mobility of students and staff. What is more, with the aim of creating a quality legal framework for the realisation of the future projects of international mobility, VISER adopted the documents titled Language Policy of VISER, enabling the possibility of having one portion of studies at VISER realised in the English language, as well as the document titled Rules and Conditions for Selection of Students and Employees for International Mobility, enabling transparency and clear rules for ranking international mobility candidates.

VISER created and adopted the documents titled Strategy of Internationalization 2019-2024 and Action Plan for the Realisation of the Strategy of Internationalization 2019-2024, further planning the extension of legal and administrative support to the realisation of international projects, the platform for monitoring project realisation and the enhancement of project visibility and outcomes.

VISER is planning to continue active participation in the projects of Erasmus+ programme Key Action 2: Cooperation for Innovation and the Exchange of Good Practices, Action Type: Capacity Building in Higher Education. Apart from this type of projects, VISER is planning to expand its circle of project types from the category Key Action 2 and get involved in projects Action Type: Knowledge Alliances, in which activities are realised with the economy, transversal skills are developed in cooperation with enterprises and outgoing and incoming mobility is realised with companies, which is of particular importance to VISER, bearing in mind the vocational nature of this school's studies. Also, apart from the significance of cooperation with the economy, special emphasis is laid on projects improving the methodology of teaching of vocational studies, realising the exchange of good practices at the European level and promoting cooperation, which makes the projects in the category of Strategic Partnerships in the Field of Vocational Education and Training, Strategic Partnerships in the Field of Higher Education and the category of Sector Skills Alliances Lot 2: Sector Skills Alliances for Design and Delivery of VET, of particular importance to VISER.

Expansion of the types of international cooperation of VISER has been set out in the Strategy of Internationalization 2019-2024 and the Action Plan for the Realisation of the Strategy of Internationalization 2019-2024.

Modernization Agenda

Through its participation in international projects thus far, VISER has aspired to ensure quality and productive cooperation with partners from local and foreign institutions of higher education, but also with economic and other organisations of the secondary type. VISER has mostly participated in Erasmus+ projects from Key Action 2: Cooperation for Innovation and Good Practices, Action Type: Capacity Building in Higher Education. Through these projects, and the previous two Tempus projects, VISER significantly improved its total capacity and potential – it had several new study programmes accredited at all levels of studies, provided significant material resources for the purpose of quality enhancement of the teaching process, gained invaluable experience while cooperating with partner institutions on those projects, particularly with regard to cooperation with foreign partners.

Owing to the projects realised thus far as well as ongoing international projects of Erasmus+ and Tempus programmes, VISER has significantly improved its laboratory equipment, modernised the teaching process, brought together theory and practice, enhanced teacher competencies and intensified the feeling of European identity. Over the course of project realisation, VISER initiated

several new study programmes in undergraduate, specialization and master applied studies. Due to its participation in international projects, VISER has become actively involved in the general improvement of the quality of higher education in Serbia and become one of the first institutions of higher education with pilot programmes for short study programmes and extended study programmes. What is more, due to the vocational nature of its educational activities, VISER has taken active part in projects the main goal of which is to bring about improvement in the field of teaching methodology in higher education and better cooperation of higher education with the economy.

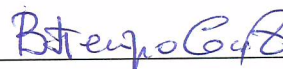
Bearing in mind the above-explained relevance of the achieved outcomes in international projects and their impact on the modernisation and overall development of VISER, the School is planning to keep having active participation in its further development in all the segments listed above and modernising itself in this direction. In addition, the School is planning to expand the types of actions it is taking part in with regard to Key Action 2: Cooperation for Innovation and Good Practices, especially to Knowledge Alliances, Strategic Partnerships in the Field of Vocational Education and Training, Strategic Partnerships in the Field of Higher Education and Sector Skills Alliances Lot 2: Sector Skills Alliances for Design and Delivery of VET. VISER expects to achieve further modernisation through projects of this kind, with particular regard to skills development and strengthening ties between the Schools and the systems of other institutions of higher education, economic organisations and other types of organisations.

Apart from expanding activities in the domain of international education to other project types, VISER is planning to take part even more in international mobility projects for students, teaching and non-teaching staff. In this way, VISER wants to invest in the improvement of education of students and staff, intensify their feeling of European identity and enhance their overall experience. Given the above, VISER has made the first step by adopting the Rulebook on International Mobility, Language Policy, and the document titled Rules and Conditions for Selection of Students and Employees for International Mobility, offering transparent criteria for candidate selection and providing inclusiveness and fairness in the process of candidate selection. With the aim of expanding opportunities for incoming students, VISER has, through its rulebooks, the Statute and Language Policy, opened the possibility of realising part of the study programmes in the English language, with regard to the selected set of courses in master studies.

The plan for the modernization of VISER means not only the involvement of VISER in the international sphere, but it also involves the aspect of developing joint and double master programmes.

Through the hereby given ways of engagement in Erasmus+ programme and its actions, VISER aspires to enhance the skills of students and staff and develop ties with other institutions of higher education, contribute to their further development, and help create an efficient and effective system of higher education.

Authorized Person



dr Vera Petrović